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ABSTRACT

The Guidelines for Educational Program Auditors in Utah were prepared to help educational program auditors (EPAs) deliver high quality services with a minimum of effort; they were intended to serve as a text for EPA training sessions, as a handbook and policy guide for EPAs and their assistants, and as a standard for judging the quality of EPA reports. The primary function of the EPA is to assure the quality and credibility of project reports. These guidelines explain the EPAs relationships to the state agency, local education agencies, and internal and external evaluators. They also describe the expected activities of the EPA and describe the contents of three reports: the critique report which is filed early in the project year and evaluates the project plan; the interim report, which evaluates the accuracy of the conclusions and recommendations of the project progress report and external evaluation report; and the final EPA report, which verifies the quality of the project final report. A sample title page for EPA reports, a Utah State Board of Education Position paper, and an Objectives, Activities, Evaluation worksheet (completed by the EPA) are appended. (Author/MV)

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GUIDELINES

FOR

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AUDITORS

FISCAL YEAR 1977-1978

IM006 491

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FORWARD

I am pleased to present the EPA guidelines for 1977-78 in July instead of October, as was the case last year. The guidelines are not substantially changed in content but have, I hope, been made easier to understand and use. As always, I am less than satisfied with both form and content, but the user is in a better position to criticize and recommend changes than I.

I thank those who criticized previous editions of the guidelines and encourage users to criticize the document that follows. Dr. W. Harold Handley's criticisms and recommendations regarding content were especially detailed and useful. I want to express my appreciation to my colleague, G. Warren Gaddis, for editing the manuscript. Errors of style that remain are due to my being stubborn or obtuse. Finally, I want to thank Teresa Miller and Kathi Thompson for their patient typing and seemingly endless revision of the manuscript.

Richard G. Keene, Ph.D.
Specialist in Research Design and Statistics
July, 1977

PREFACE

This document was prepared to help the educational program auditor (EPA) deliver high quality services with a minimum of effort. It was intended to serve as a text for EPA training sessions, a handbook and policy guide for EPAs and their assistants, and a standard for judging the quality of EPA reports.

In 1972, EPAs generally perceived their role as similar to that of an external evaluator. The trend toward separating the role of EPA from that of evaluator was started in Fiscal 1973-74 by recommending Stenner and Webster's handbook as a standard for EPA practices (Stenner & Webster, 1971). In 1974-75, Stenner and Webster's handbook was used as the primary guide to EPA practices, state guidelines being issued regarding some practices and policies not discussed in the handbook or for which the recommended practices seemed inappropriate. In Fiscal 1975-76, a set of state guidelines for EPAs was issued and the reader was referred to Morin's (1971) handbook for a more detailed treatment of EPA procedures. These guidelines were expanded and revised in 1976-77. The following document represents a second revision of the guidelines originally issued for use in Fiscal 1975-76.

INTRODUCTION

This document provides guidelines for practices and reports of EPAs for Title IV Part C developmental projects and selected state experimental-developmental projects. EPAs should not deviate substantially from the guidelines without prior permission from the State Education Agency (SEA) program coordinator or the specialist in research design and statistics.

The primary function of the EPA is to assure the quality and credibility of project reports. This is accomplished by providing expert and objective criticism of project plans and reports. The EPA's relationships to project directors, internal and external evaluators, and others are explained below. A summary of evaluation functions is presented in Table 1.

External evaluators usually contact the EPA of the project they are to evaluate, and may request that the EPA be present at the time of the on-site visit. Internal evaluators, whether district or contracted personnel, work closely with the EPA, especially during the early phases of the project. They may ask the EPA's advice or suggest specific monitoring functions.

The following sections describe three EPA reports: 1) the critique report, filed early in the project year; 2) the progress report, which evaluates the accuracy of the conclusions and recommendations of the project progress report and external evaluation report; and 3) the final EPA report, prepared following the preparation of the project final report.

Table 1

Typical Evaluation Functions Of Experimental Projects

	LEA Activities	EPA Activities	External Evaluation Team Activities	SEA Activities
Continuing Projects	1. Writes evaluation plan in proposal.			
				2. Issues grant award.
		3. Writes critique report.		
	4. Writes modified evaluation plan.			
		5. Monitors evaluation activities. (continuing activity)		
	6. Writes progress report.			
			7. Writes report.	
		8. Writes interim report.		
	9. Prepares application for continuation.			
				10. Issues continuation grant.
	11. Writes annual (final) report.			
Terminating Projects		12. Writes final report.		
	13. Writes modified evaluation plan.			
		14. Writes critique report.		
		15. Monitors evaluation activities. (continuing activity)		
	16. Writes annual (final) report.			
		17. Writes final report.		
			18. Writes report.	

CRITIQUE (PRELIMINARY) REPORT

Guidelines for the critique report are presented below. An outline for the critique report is suggested by the centered-underlined headings.

Preliminaries

A sample title page for EPA reports is attached as Appendix A, page 26. The title page contains the following information:

1) Project reference number
2) Project name
3) District name
4) Project director's name, address, and phone number
5) Effective date of report
6) Date report completed
7) Due date for report
8) Date of submission to LEA and SEA
9) EPA's name, address, and phone number
10) Name(s) of assistant EPAs

The title page is followed by a table of contents listing at least six major sections and all appendices. As an alternative, a table of contents and a separate list of appendices may be used. In either case, each section and appendix lists a page number that is sequenced from the front, beginning with the first page after the preliminaries. The six major sections are: 1) Introduction, 2) Statement of the Information Reviewed, 3) Objectives, Research Design and Audit Plan, 4) Summary and Recommendations, 5) Signature(s) and 6) Documentation.

Introduction

EPA reports are addressed to the project director, copies being supplied to the district superintendent and the state coordinator.

The introduction to the critique report states that the

purpose is to assist the LEAs in their evaluation and reporting of the project by recommending efficient and effective evaluation procedures.

Quality of EPA Functions

Quality of the EPA functions considers two subjects, professional background and independence.

Professional background. This section is usually only a single sentence referring the reader to the vita previously submitted to the LEA by the prime contractor.

The EPA must have attended a workshop conducted by the prime contractor and have been approved by the Research and Development Division of the SEA. The EPA must also attend at least one seminar during the fiscal year in which he is serving. Seminars on EPA practices are conducted annually by the Research and Development Division of the SEA.

Independence. The EPA affirms that the audit opinion given will be unbiased objective statements and professional judgments. In the event the EPA is unable to be objective or is believed by others to be biased, this circumstance will be brought to the attention of the LEA and SEA so that the EPA's value to the district can be reassessed.

Statement of the Information Reviewed

This section describes all of the information bases used for preparation of the report.

The sources of information to be considered are documents such as the project proposal, evaluation reports, related infor-

mation such as the grant award letters, and federal and state codes regulations and guidelines. The EPA is responsible for identifying and obtaining relevant documents.

Project proposals. Proposals are of two types, original and continuation. An original proposal contains the general plans for accomplishing the project mission. For multi-year projects, the original proposal contains more detailed plans for the first year of operation than for subsequent years. A continuation proposal contains updates of goals, objectives, and plans for project operation after the original year.

If a project is in the first year of operation, the EPA examines the original project proposal, the grant award letter (which may stipulate requirements for the grant not included in the proposal) and any letters from the SEA program coordinator which bear on the operation of the project. If the project is not in the first year of operation, the EPA obtains copies of documents describing the history of the project. These will include the original proposal and continuation proposal for the current year. Copies of proposals, grant award letters, and agreements for modifications of project operation may be obtained from the SEA program coordinator.

Internal evaluation reports. If the project is not new, each available report should be skimmed, evaluated as to its importance to the EPA, and if it is found to be important, read in detail. Table 1, page 2, describes internal evaluaton (project) reports that the EPA can obtain from the State Coordinator, but other reports may also exist.

Project materials. The EPA examines and describes the curriculum materials essential and unique to the project. In some cases, only a sample of materials can be examined. The EPA examines and describes as much of the curricular materials as necessary to obtain an understanding of expected classroom procedures and to assure that materials used or produced by the project meet standards of quality.

EPA reports. Previous EPA reports are studied in conjunction with internal and external evaluations in order to gain perspective on the progress of project operations and on the capability of the project staff.

External evaluation reports. All external evaluation reports are obtained from the SEA program coordinator and are read in detail.

Federal codes and regulations. The EPA is not expected to review all the legal codes and regulations under which a project operates, but he should be generally familiar with legal requirements related to educational research. Discussions of such requirements have been prepared for the American Educational Research Association (AERA) (Michael & Weinberger, 1976; Michael & Weinberger, 1977). In addition, the Research Division of the SEA will provide bibliographies related to particular legal requirements.

State guidelines and codes. The Utah State Board of Education Position Paper (see Appendix B, p. 28) on evaluation in education is advisory in nature. It recommends that multiple measures of outcome be applied, that a variety of measurement modes be used rather

be applied, that a variety of measurement modes be used rather than relying upon standardized achievement tests, and that evaluations be conducted in a systematic, coordinated manner rather than as fragmented projects. External Support Services of the SEA can provide assistance in finding documents relevant to State law.

Interviews

Interviews provide historical perspective and alert the EPA to undocumented changes in plans or to missing documents which he should read.

At an early stage in becoming familiar with a project, the EPA usually interviews the state curriculum specialist most familiar with the project, and may wish to interview the program coordinator and the specialist in research design and evaluation. The EPA always interviews the project director by telephone or in person.

Verbal Agreements between SEA and LEA

Verbal agreements between the project director and SEA officials are sometimes reported to the EPA or the EPA may be present at meetings in which such verbal agreements are made. The EPA should request written confirmation of such verbal agreements from the program coordinator.

Other

In order to evaluate the research design the EPA may have to turn to a variety of resources including books on research design, evaluations and descriptions of tests, test manuals, references on statistical procedures, reviews of research in a curriculum area

under consideration. The Specialist in Research Design and Statistics of the SEA may be helpful by recommending appropriate resources.

Objectives and Research Design

The subjects addressed in this section of the critique report are concerned with two topics, viz., evaluation of objectives, and evaluation of research design.

Evaluation of objectives

Evaluation of objectives requires consideration of the goals, objectives, planned activities, and research design of the project.

The first step is to clarify and state the major goals. If these are not stated in existing documents they may be inferred from planned activities. If the goals are unclear or apparently incomplete it is best to discuss the planned activities with the project director, and then ask the director if the project has the goals which seem to be implied. In this way, an understanding of goals can sometimes be obtained and a statement of goals agreed upon.

After the major goals are stated, the objectives associated with the goals are clarified. The EPA might need to assist the project director in distinguishing between three types of objectives; viz., 1) management objectives, 2) process objectives (activities), and 3) learner outcome objectives. It is necessary to distinguish between learner populations such as administrator, teacher, and student. When the learner objectives associated with each goal have been described for each learner population,

some specific learner outcome objectives are identified as those to be evaluated. Several sets of standards for such objectives are in common use (Morin, 1971; Mager, 1962; and Stenner and Webster, 1971). In general, these standards require that objectives state "who" is to do "what" at "what level of attainment" and under "what conditions." Stringent application of such standards is seldom appropriate for all objectives, but at least one such "behavioral" objective should be specified for each learner population. Other more general objectives should usually be stated and evaluated. All stated objectives should be understandable, non-trivial, and susceptible to evaluation, either directly or indirectly.

A sample form used for critiquing each objective is attached (Appendix C, pp. 30 to 33). One two-page form, referred to as an "Objectives, Activities Evaluation" (OAE) worksheet is completed for each objective that is to be evaluated, the left hand page including the original project plan and the right hand page containing the EPA's recommendations.

Evaluation of the research design

The evaluation of the research design generally includes the following considerations:

1) Needs determination
2) Adequacy of description of the intervention process
3) Data collection procedures
4) Sampling techniques
5) Control group selection or variance of independent variable(s)
6) Evaluation of measurement devices and techniques

7) Qualifications of personnel involved in the evaluation
8) Procedures for verification of accuracy of data
9) Statistical analysis procedures
10) Other issues related to generalizability

Needs determination. For each major outcome objective to be evaluated the EPA reviews the evidence of need. The EPA can frequently recommend that objective evidence of need be obtained by analysis of baseline data.

Adequacy of description of the intervention process. The EPA should verify the documentation for the intervention process for each important outcome variable. Information such as the following should be obtained.

1) Grade level of participants
2) Number of participants
3) Period of operation or duration of treatment
4) Special materials
5) Staffing characteristics
6) Special facilities required
7) Scheduling patterns
8) Parent community involvement
9) Pre-service and in-service training required

The detail included in the description of each of these elements depends upon the importance of the objective and the size of the project.

Data collection procedures. The description of the procedures should include the types of data collected, persons responsible, timelines, and methods.

Sampling techniques. The EPA evaluates the expected sample sizes selection techniques, and evidence of representativeness. Factors related to sample size are discussed in Cohen (1969) and Kish (1965). Factors related to sample selection techniques are

discussed in Kish (1965). Factors related to evidence of representativeness can be found in Cronbach, Gleser, Nanda & Rajaratnam (1972).

Control group selection or variance of independent variable(s). Verification of the comparability of the control and experimental groups should be incorporated in the evaluation design. Comparing pre-test scores of experimental and control groups is one way of doing this. If a sample of students in both experimental and control groups are given the pre-test then the comparability of the groups can be examined and the effects of the pre-testing itself can be assessed. If a regression or similar design is used, then the issues usually associated with comparability of control and experimental groups are addressed by assuring adequate variance in the independent variables and including important concomitant variables in the design, e.g., intelligence, GPA, sex, school, and teacher.

Evaluation of measurement devices and techniques. The EPA examines and verifies that each measurement device or method used in the evaluation is valid, reliable, and sensitive to measure the range, scope, and nature of the behavior of concern. The American Psychological Association (APA) standards discuss the essential considerations (American Psychological Association, 1975).

Qualifications of personnel involved in the evaluation. The EPA verifies that the persons responsible for data collection are qualified for their tasks. When standardized tests are used, the APA, test standards referred to above are useful as a

guide to requirements.

Procedures for verification of accuracy of data. The EPA should verify the accuracy of a sample of the data collected.

Statistical analysis procedures. The EPA should have knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of various statistical analyses to recommend efficient and effective methods of treatment. The simplest data treatment needed to yield accurate and convincing results is ordinarily the best choice. In no case are tests of significance between means of raw gain scores to be recommended or approved. See Bereiter (1967) and Bohrnstedt (1969) for a discussion of gain scores.) In general, magnitude of effect should be assessed as well as statistical significance.

A recent development in statistical method is rapid computer solution of maximum likelihood path analysis problems (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1976). This statistical technique seems to open many new design possibilities of which the EPA should be aware. (See Duncan, 1975.)

Educational Audit Plan

The plan of activities during the year indicates not only expectations of the EPA's activities but also those of the LEA and an external evaluation team. A convenient way to handle this is by including a flow chart which indicates the evaluation activities to be undertaken by the LEA and SEA, and the EPA activities associated with each.

Summary and Recommendations

In this section, the EPA summarizes the evaluation findings discussed earlier and itemizes recommendations. The recommendations may provide alternative procedures and are explained to the project director before filing the report.

Signature

In instances where assistants are used to conduct the EPA functions, the signatures of both the EPA and the assistant(s) are included. The EPA or EPA firm is accountable for the quality and accuracy of the report.

If assistant EPAs are used in completing the tasks, the senior EPA is responsible for assuring that the assistants operate with proper supervision. Their work must be reviewed by the EPA.

Documentation (Appendices)

This section of the report includes all pertinent reference material necessary to substantiate the conclusions, judgments, and opinions stated in the body. If page numbers already appear on the documents which are being appended then a second set of page numbers is used to indicate the pagination of the EPA's report, these page numbers being placed in parentheses in the upper right hand corner of the pages.

INTERIM EPA REPORT

Guidelines for the interim report are presented below. An outline for the interim report is suggested by the centered-underlined headings.

Preliminaries

A sample title page for EPA reports is attached as Appendix A, page 26. The title page contains the following information:

1) Project reference number
2) Project name
3) District name
4) Project director's name, address, and phone number
5) Effective date of report
6) Date report completed
7) Due date for report
8) Date of submission to LEA and SEA
9) EPA's name, address, and phone number
10) Name(s) of assistant EPAs

The title page is followed by a table of contents listing at least six major sections and all appendices. As an alternative, a table of contents and a separate list of appendices may be used. In either case, each section and appendix lists a page number that is sequenced from the front, beginning with the first page after the preliminaries. The six major sections are: 1) Introduction, 2) Activities and Documents, 3) Opinion(s), 4) Commendations and Recommendations, 5) Signature(s), and 6) Documentation.

Introduction

EPA reports are addressed to the project director, copies being supplied to the district superintendent and the state coordinator.

The primary purpose of the EPA is to serve the project and, more broadly, the Local Education Agency (LEA). Copies of reports are submitted to the State Education Agency (SEA), however, for four reasons, viz., because EPA services are funded through the state agency, because the SEA supplies copies of EPA reports to others such as external evaluation teams, to aid in the evaluation of program management at the same level, and to permit evaluation of EPA functions. The SEA recipient of EPA reports is the state coordinator of the program, although individual EPAs ordinarily submit reports to a prime contractor who forwards them to the SEA.

The introduction to the interim report states that the purpose is to verify the progress report and critique the external evaluation report.

Activities and Documents

This section describes the documents and observations on which the judgments about the project are based.

Documents

The documents usually pertinent to the interim report are: 1) the proposal, 2) modifications of the proposal, 3) planning documents used by the project director, 4) needs assessment data, 5) the preliminary audit report and audit plan, 6) the progress report, and 6) the external evaluation report.

Observations

Observations through telephone calls and on-site visits are listed with the major purposes and findings. Findings of on-site

visits are usually reported in detail. When on-site visits are conducted by persons other than the senior EPA, this should be reported with the findings.

Opinion Statement

The EPA states whether the interim project report and external evaluation reports are accurate and with what confidence the opinion is given.

The first sentence in the EPA's interim report usually begins "In our professional opinion. . ." The opinion section includes a detailed rationale for the opinion being rendered. There are four types of opinions which an EPA may render, viz., 1) unqualified opinion; 2) equivocal opinion; 3) disclaimer opinion; and 4) adverse opinion. The nature of each type of opinion is described below.

Unqualified opinion

An unqualified opinion indicates that the EPA has, on the basis of the audit examination, determined that the evaluation process was conducted as outlined in the agreed upon evaluation design. It implies that there are no reasons evident to the EPA for questioning the competency and fairness with which the evaluation was carried out and reported.

Equivocal opinion

An equivocal opinion indicates that the auditor is not in agreement with the evaluation procedures used or does not agree

with some of the interpretations of the evaluation data. For an equivocal opinion, the EPA explains the reasons for the qualification(s). Equivocal opinions are also be utilized when a qualification is in order because of limitation in scope (e.g. when the EPA is unable to verify first hand the quality of data collection procedures).

Disclaimer opinion

A disclaimer opinion is used when it is impossible to make a statement regarding the competency and fairness of the evaluation results because the records are incomplete or inadequate, or the EPA is otherwise uncertain of the results. In such cases, the EPA simply disclaims an overall opinion and indicates the reasons for doing so.

Occasionally, it is impractical for the EPA to carry out all of the desirable activities, even with the assistance of others. In these cases the EPA may wish to issue an equivocal opinion or may disclaim an opinion, depending on the nature and significance of the inadequacy. In many instances the EPA may feel confident in issuing an opinion on some aspects of the evaluation and not on others. In these instances, the EPA may issue what is called an itemized opinion, individually discussing those items on which an opinion is either unqualified, disclaimed, equivocal, or adverse.

Adverse opinion

An adverse opinion states the conclusions in the evaluation report are unwarranted because either the data are inaccurate or

the conclusions are not justified by analysis of the data. The adverse opinion is used only where the exception with respect to competency, fairness, accuracy of data, and conclusions is so serious as to rule out an equivocal opinion.

Commendations and Recommendations

The commendations and recommendations section summarizes the EPA's judgments about the adequacies and inadequacies of the progress of the project evaluation efforts.

The first portion of this section itemizes the activities and sections of the report which the EPA wishes to commend as adequate or excellent.

The last portion of this section itemizes those project activities and segments of the report which are inadequate. The EPA describes the inadequacies and lists recommendations for the alleviation of deficiencies noted in the opinion section. The recommendations should be general rather than specific, posing several alternative actions for possible sources of assistance to the LEA. Exceptions to this rule of thumb include those cases where only a single solution is possible such as when the LEA is in violation of a law or regulation.

Signature(s)[1]

In instances where assistants are used to conduct the EPA functions, the signatures of both the EPA and the assistant(s) are included. The EPA or EPA firm is accountable for the quality and

[1] Guidelines for the signature(s) of the interim report are identical to those given for the critique (preliminary) report, page 13.

accuracy of the report.

If assistant EPAs are used in completing the tasks, the senior EPA is responsible for assuring that the assistants operate with proper supervision.

Documentation (Appendices)[2]

This section of the report includes all pertinent reference material necessary to substantiate the conclusions, judgments, and opinions stated in the body. If page numbers already appear on the documents which are being appended then a second set of page numbers is used to indicate the pagination of the EPA's report, these page numbers being placed in parentheses in the upper right hand corner of the pages.

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[2] Guidelines for the documentation section of the interim report are identical to those given for the critique (preliminary) report, page 13.

FINAL EPA REPORT

Guidelines for the final report are presented below. An outline for the final report is suggested by the centered-underlined headings.

Preliminaries

A sample title page for EPA reports is attached as Appendix A, page 26. The title page contains the following information:

1) Project reference number
2) Project name
3) District name
4) Project director's name, address, and phone number
5) Effective date of report
6) Date report completed
7) Due date for report
8) Date of submission to LEA and SEA
9) EPA's name, address, and phone number
10) Name(s) of assistant EPAs

The title page is followed by a table of contents listing at least six major sections and all appendices. As an alternative, a table of contents and a separate list of appendices may be used. In either case, each section and appendix lists a page number that is sequenced from the front, beginning with the first page after the preliminaries. The six major sections are: 1) Introduction, 2) Activities, Documents and Reports, 3) Opinion(s), 4) Commendations and Recommendations, 5) Signature(s), and 6) documentation.

Introduction

EPA reports are addressed to the project director, copies being supplied to the district superintendent and the state coordinator.

The primary purpose of the EPA is to serve the project and,

more broadly, the Local Education Agency (LEA). Copies of reports are submitted to the State Education Agency (SEA), however, for four reasons, viz., because EPA services are funded through the state agency, because the SEA supplies copies of EPA reports to others such as external evaluation teams, to aid in the evaluation of program management at the same level, and to permit evaluation of EPA functions. The SEA recipient of EPA reports is the state coordinator of the program, although individual EPAs ordinarily submit reports to a prime contractor who forwards them to the SEA.

The introduction to the final report states that the purpose of the report is to verify or criticize the accuracy of the conclusions and recommendations stated in the project final report.

EPA Activities, Documents, and Reports

This section reviews the services provided by the SEA, describing the documents reviewed, observations, and interviews accomplished, and reports submitted. The evidence cited in the opinion statement is described in this section, thus simplifying the explanation of opinions.

Opinion Statement[3]

The EPA states whether the annual project report is accurate and with what confidence the opinion is given.

The first sentence in the EPAs final report usually

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[3] Guidelines for the opinion section of the final report are identical to those given for the interim report, pp. 16-18.

begins "In our professional opinion. . ." The opinion section includes a detailed rationale for the opinion being rendered. There are four types of opinions which an EPA may render, viz., 1) unqualified opinion; 2) equivocal opinion; 3) disclaimer opinion; and 4) adverse opinion. The nature of each type of opinion is described below.

Unqualified opinion

An unqualified opinion indicates that the EPA has on the basis of the audit examination, determined that the evaluation process was conducted as outlined in the agreed upon evaluation design and that the evaluation results are accurate as reported. It implies that there are no reasons evident to the EPA for questioning the competency and fairness with which the evaluation was carried out and reported.

Equivocal opinion

An equivocal opinion indicates that the auditor is not in agreement with the evaluation procedures used or does not agree with some of the interpretations of the evaluation data. In this type of opinion, the EPA will normally explain in the report the reasons for the qualification(s). Equivocal opinions should also be utilized when a qualification is in order because of limitation in scope (e.g. when the EPA is unable to verify first hand the quality of data collection procedures).

Disclaimer opinion

A disclaimer opinion is used when it is impossible to make a statement regarding the competency and fairness of the evaluation

results because the records are incomplete or inadequate, or the EPA is otherwise uncertain of the results. In such cases, the EPA simply disclaims an overall opinion and indicates the reasons for doing so.

Occasionally, it is impractical for the EPA to carry out all of the desirable or planned activities, even with the assistance of others. In these cases, the EPA may wish to issue an equivocal opinion or may disclaim an opinion, depending on the nature and significance of the inadequacy. In many instances the EPA may feel confident in issuing an opinion on some aspects of the evaluation and not on others. In these instances, the EPA may issue what is called an itemized opinion, individually discussing those items on which an opinion is either disclaimed or equivocal.

Adverse opinion

An adverse opinion states the conclusions in the evaluation report are unwarranted because either the data are inaccurate or the conclusions are not justified by analysis of the data. The adverse opinion is used only where the exception with respect to competency, fairness, accuracy of data, and conclusions is so blatant as to rule out an equivocal opinion. The adverse opinion is a serious charge and should be rendered only when substantial documentation is supplied.

Commendations and Recommendations[4]

The commendations and recommendations section summarize the EPA's judgments about the adequacies and inadequacies of the final project report.

The first portion of this section itemizes activities and sections of the report which the EPA wishes to commend as adequate or excellent.

The last portion of this section itemizes those project activities and segments of the report which are inadequate. The EPA describes the inadequacies and lists recommendations for the alleviation of deficiencies noted in the opinion section. The recommendations should be general rather than specific, posing several alternative actions or possible sources of assistance to the LEA. Exceptions to this rule of thumb include those cases where only a single solution is possible such as when the LEA is in violation of a law or regulation.

Signature(s)[5]

In instances where assistants are used to conduct the EPA functions, the signatures of both the EPA and the assistant(s) are included. The EPA or EPA firm is accountable for the quality and accuracy of the report.

If assistant EPAs are used in completing the tasks, the senior EPA is responsible for assuring that the assistants operate

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[4] Guidelines for the commendations and recommendations section of the final report are identical to those given for the interim report, page 18.

[5] Guidelines for the signature(s) section of the final report are identical to those given for the critique (preliminary) report, page 13.

with proper supervision. Their work must be reviewed by the EPA.

Documentation (Appendices)[6]

This section of the report includes all pertinent reference material necessary to substantiate the conclusions, judgments, and opinions stated in the body. If page numbers already appear on the documents which are being appended then a second set of page numbers is used to indicate the pagination of the EPA's report, these page numbers being placed in parentheses in the upper right hand corner of the pages.

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[6] Guidelines for the documentation section of the final report are identical to those given for the interim report, page 19.

APPENDIX A:
SAMPLE TITLE PAGE
FOR
EPA REPORTS

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AUDITOR'S REPORT

Project Reference Number _____

Project Name _____

Project Location _____
(School, District, etc.)

Project Director: Name _____

Address _____

Phone No. _____

Effective Date of Report: From _____ to _____

Date Report Completed: _____

Date Report Due: _____

Date Submitted to LEA and SEA: _____

EPA: Name _____

Address _____

Phone No. _____

Assistant to EPA: Name _____

Address _____

Phone No. _____

Type of Report: _____ Critique (Preliminary)

_____ Interim

_____ Final

_____ Other: _____

APPENDIX B:

UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

POSITION PAPER

Utah State Board of Education

Position Paper

Evaluation in Education

(adopted March 19, 1971)

Evaluation is the process of measuring and interpreting the relative success or failure in the attainment of defined educational goals and objectives. Sound evaluation is dependent upon the degree to which educational goals have been defined in measurable terms as well as on the preciseness of the measuring device or technique. A related concern in evaluation is content validity or the relevancy of defined educational objectives to real-life objectives for the learners. It is recognized that many educational goals are vague and difficult to describe in measurable terms. However, the importance of such goals should not be judged solely by their measurability. Educational objectives that truly reflect the educational goals should be determined first and then procedures should be employed to provide the best possible evaluation.

New approaches will continue to expand evaluation potential. Many kinds of measurement instruments and techniques are being developed to permit assessment of subtle variables such as attitudes, feelings, and interests, as well as student characteristics in relationship to learning. The complexity of measuring student behavior mandates the use of multiple supportive instruments, thereby basing conclusions on several measures rather than one.

The role of evaluation in education is of paramount importance. It can serve as a powerful strategy for the improvement of education. Evaluation provides the means for determining the degree to which objectives are being achieved; it also permits comparison of achievement levels of different types of students and the effect of various kinds of programs, facilities and materials. Without evaluation, effectiveness of the educational program cannot be determined and improvements cannot be systematically initiated. Educators tend to strive more diligently to achieve success in those areas of education which can be measured, whether the measurement be in terms of test scores, the number of school dropouts, attendance, observation, or other factors.

Each educational unit (state, district, school) should conduct systematic evaluation through a coordinated system rather than by fragmented projects. This system should be comprehensive enough to be useable by all levels of the educational community from federal to local and therefore permit multi-use of information. On the other hand, the system should be flexible enough to meet unique decision making needs at any level.

APPENDIX C:

OAE WORKSHEET

OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, EVALUATION (OAE) WORKSHEET

The Objectives, Activities, Evaluation (OAE) Worksheets are usually completed by the EPA as he reads the application and works with the project staff. All the learner outcome objectives for which the project has been funded must be included; other objectives may be included. Activities are the action steps or processes that the staff will take to achieve the objectives. Both objectives and activities are stated in terms in which they may be monitored. The evaluation column is used to delineate the projected procedures for determining the degree to which objectives were achieved. Any instruments that will be used in the evaluation are described; the description should include at least: name, source, and purpose.

The completed OAE worksheet (or Validation Application, Part II) is included in the critique (preliminary) report. Subsequent reports refer to progress or changes related to OAE entries.

I. Objective:

II. Description of Project Activities Related to Objective:

III. Design for Evaluation of Objective:

IV. Instruments:

V. Evaluation of Objective:

VI. Recommendations for Objective:

VII. Assessment of Evaluation Design:

VIII. Recommendations for Evaluation Design:

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

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